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TASK ORDER UNDER STRATEGIC POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL REFORM IQC SUPPORT TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT OF GEORGIA (SNG)

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN

MARCH 2005

This publication was produced for review by the United States Agency for International Development. It was prepared by Development Alternatives, Inc.

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The authors' views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.



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INTRODUCTION

On September 29, 2004, Development Alternatives, Inc. (DAI) was awarded the Support to the New Government of Georgia (SNG) task order under the Strategic Policy and Institutional Reform indefinite quantity contract (IQC). DAI has since assisted and supported the work of the U.S. Government Senior Advisor, Daniel Kunin, by advising staff in the Offices of the President and Prime Minister on improving the effectiveness of their operations. To strengthen the day-to-day operations of these Offices and foster an effective policy formulation environment, the DAI team has provided training and technical assistance in:

- More effective management of executive offices;
- Strengthened policy formulation and implementation capacity, including developing procedures and practices that assist officials in prioritizing reforms;
- Improved intra-governmental consultation and information flow, both vertically (with lower-level staff) and horizontally (with peers);
- Enhanced consultation with the Parliament of Georgia;
- More effective outreach and communication with citizens, and increased opportunities for public participation in the policy arena; and
- Operations that result in accountable performance of officials and staff, including the proper handling of resources entrusted to them.

As per the requirements of the task order, DAI is pleased to submit this Institutional Capacity Development Plan. The document is based on the findings and recommendations of the DAI experts who have worked on the project.

This document is structured to first provide an assessment of the current state of the organization and operations at the Offices of the President and Prime Minister. An institutional capacity development plan follows; it comprises recommendations on structure, staff, training, procedures, and technology.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ASSESSMENT OF THE OFFICES OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER

The Offices of both the President and the Prime Minister are remarkably similar in their makeup. Both incorporate an organizational structure that surrounds the principals with aides whose primary role is not to advise but, rather, to execute their directives. These aides are eager and seemingly capable of doing much more to help the President and Prime Minister implement their policy reform agenda.

In the Chancellery itself, the management structure appears to keep most departments disconnected from other departments throughout the building. This lack of cross-departmental communication stifles creativity and initiative because employees tend to limit themselves to their own office suites and begin to believe that they do not need to know what others are doing. They could not be more wrong. Communication and involvement are the essence of a successful governmental unit. Information that individual departments keep to themselves could be shared to promote ingenuity and resourcefulness. Further, decisions that now appear rash could appear sage after proper outreach and communication.

The current structure also contains a great managerial imbalance. Most of the employees of each organization exist in a management structure that awkwardly combines divergent responsibilities. A more effective structure would group administrative and operational employees in one branch of the organizational chart and assign liaison or political employees in another. A more balanced approach would ensure that each department receives the necessary attention from a Senior Manager. A revised division of responsibilities could counter this imbalance.

INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report aims to illustrate how both the President and Prime Minister's operations could make significant moves to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. Structural balance and improved communication are at the heart of the Institutional Capacity Development Plan and Recommendations.

Both operations require a structure that provides a balance of responsibility and a forum for accountability. The structures detailed within are designed to enable all members of the Chancellery to feel as if they are part of a team and that their performance helps to accomplish the overall goals of the operation.

This restructured model includes a traditional management system headed by a Chief of Staff assisted by a Secretariat. Underneath that Chief of Staff, five Directorates would be tasked to accomplish the administrative, political, and policy mission of the Government. Each Director would oversee a variety of departments and report to the Chief of Staff while retaining the necessary access to the President and the Prime Minister.

This model, if implemented in conjunction with proper training and a professional civil service system, would enable both the President and the Prime Minister to avail themselves to an efficient, effective team of professional advisors and aides ready to make their policy reforms into reality.

Finally, technological limitations play a large role in the lack of effective communication throughout the Chancellery. Any efforts in this area would quickly improve operations in both administrations.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

- Appoint and empower a Chief of Staff
- Restructure Directorates
 - Appoint a Director of Domestic Affairs and a Director of Foreign Affairs
- Strengthen the President's Secretariat
 - Appoint a Director of Scheduling
 - Appoint a Special Assistant to serve as the President's 'right hand'
 - Appoint a specialist to serve as Chief Writer
- Reorganize the Office of Citizens Reception

OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

- Appoint and empower a Chief of Staff
- Restructure Directorates
 - Appoint a Cabinet Secretary and a Director of Foreign Affairs
- Strengthen the Prime Minister's Secretariat
 - Reorganize Chief of Prime Minister's Office
 - Appoint a Director of Scheduling
 - Appoint a Special Assistant to serve as the Prime Minister's 'right hand'
 - Appoint a specialist to serve as Chief Writer
- Reorganize Citizens' Letters and Information Unit

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH OFFICES

CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS

- Draft job descriptions for every employee and manager
- Conduct a full portfolio review
- Initiate a civil service testing system
- Arrange training

PROCEDURAL CHANGES

- Conduct regular department head meetings
- Facilitate introductions between key staff of the President and the Prime Minister with their counterparts in the ministries
- Develop a proactive scheduling plan

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

- Install a building-wide phone system
- Network entire building
- Develop Intranet for both the President and Prime Minister's operations
- Procure scheduling software

ASSESSMENT: OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

The Office of the President currently consists of three divisions with managers who report directly to the President. For the most part, these managers are not advisors but assistants whom the President trusts to execute his directives. Most departments in the Office of the President appear to be disconnected from other departments in the building. As such, there is a significant lack of cross-departmental communication.

The current structure has a poor balance of management responsibilities. More than half of the staff is located under the Head of Administration. This divergent group of employees—ranging from the Parliamentary Secretary to the building management and procurement staff—all report to the same individual with very little effective middle management. This imbalance could be countered by a more even and sensible division of responsibilities.

MANAGEMENT

The President does not employ a true Chief of Staff. A Chief of Staff serves two roles: first, as a trusted person whose primary function is to help the President to address day-to-day issues without losing focus on the big picture; and second, as a manager to whom all other staff eventually report—even if those other staff have direct access to the President. Instead, the President supervises a horizontal series of managers, none of whom is wholly involved in, apprised of, or all that concerned with the others' portfolios and activities. These managers have access to the President and he dictates day-to-day operations. Such a structure tends to result in an operation that works extremely hard and does some good things, but gets caught up in the immediate crisis of the day at the expense of long-term accomplishment. A Chief of Staff could help the President and other senior managers set priorities and, most importantly, help everyone stick to them.

The individual managers each appears to have limited hiring authority, subject to budget restrictions, but lack firing authority. Most have a handle on the strengths and weaknesses of the existing structure and the abilities of their respective staff. A few structural changes would make more time available for these managers and their staff to assist in the development of ideas and execution of policy goals.

The skills of the middle managers interviewed vary but most are fully capable and enthusiastic. Most had an excellent understanding of their technological needs and are eager for suggestions. Again, a few structural changes would greatly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of many of these middle managers. The Head of Administration planned to restructure the Office in January but that effort, which was to include oral and written competency tests for employees, has not yet occurred.

STAFFING

Most staff, especially upper and middle management believe they are busy—to the point of being overwhelmed. However, more junior staff seem to be eager to take on increased responsibility and additional projects. A complete portfolio review could address this.

Further, few employees have job descriptions and there is no civil service testing system for minimum competencies. This is a situation that must be addressed.

PROCEDURES

As with the management structure, the President is personally involved in scheduling. He directs the schedule and routinely makes changes to it. The result of this structure is that the principal ends up serving as scheduler by involving himself in logistics (meeting times, places, and changes) instead of

limiting involvement to priority determination (which meeting to have and in what order). It is not clear that anyone involved has a complete picture of the schedule and technological limitations make last minute changes quite burdensome. While this system is feasible in the short-term, it is unsustainable because it breeds frustration and stifles cohesiveness and creativity by forcing staff to spend more time on logistics and less time identifying potential opportunities. Under a different structure, changes could be made more efficiently and, ideally, the value of the President's meetings could be improved. Each member of the leadership staff deals with different pieces of the agenda. If each of them knew the entire schedule, one might be able to suggest agenda items relevant to another's meeting.

Apparently, three people coordinate the President's schedule :

- The President's Executive Secretary handles his daily schedule, travels with the President to all meetings, and coordinates the President's daily requests for meetings with members of parliament (MPs), Ministers, and others and.
- The Head of Administration coordinates pre-planned meetings with Ministers—including the weekly Meeting of the Government.
- The Executive Assistant to the President coordinates meetings with Ambassadors, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), visiting foreign dignitaries, and investors, and works with Daniel Kunin to plan meetings and events when the President travels abroad. She has an assistant who handles the logistical details of her segment of the schedule.

The two types of scheduling—reactive (in response to requests) and proactive (seeking meetings and events to further policy goals)—are handled with great disparity in effectiveness.

The Office of the President reacts to citizen, organization, business, or foreign official requests for meetings by forwarding them to the Executive Secretariat. Meeting requests come in by phone or letter; callers are asked to put the request in writing. Requests are collected daily and reviewed by the Executive Assistant who instructs her aide to reject some meeting requests and forward others to the Prime Minister or other Ministers and staff as appropriate. The Executive Assistant then takes those requests she deems important to the President for his review—this often happens twice a day. The President decides with whom he wants to meet and the Executive Assistant's aide then handles the details of the accepted meetings by coordinating logistics between the Executive Secretary, Security, and Protocol. She also forwards the rejected meetings to the appropriate staff or Ministry.

Proactive scheduling is a much different matter. The President's international travel schedule is clearly targeted and meetings are set up proactively. However, while the President routinely calls for meetings throughout the course of the day, there is little evidence of proactive, targeted scheduling either in Tbilisi or throughout Georgia. It is unclear how regions, investors, or businesses are targeted. This does not come as a surprise because the prevailing mood among staff (and presumably the President) is that their political standing is so strong that traditional, politically targeted scheduling is unnecessary.

Finally, the President does not have a Special Assistant—a right-hand person always at the President's side helping to manage the day, taking notes, making phone calls, and so on. Depending on the context of the meeting or event, different staff members attend meetings with the President. Those staff members are then responsible for information dissemination and follow-up and the President himself must track that follow-up.

PUBLIC INTERACTION

Transparency reforms are a primary concern for many in the Administration; they have made great progress toward opening this government to the citizenry. However, citizen interaction with the Administration is well intentioned but disjointed. The system is laced with redundancies and needs an infusion of resources to reach its full potential.

The following is an overview of the President's citizen's response program. The Prime Minister's is similar, but on a much smaller scale.

Citizens contact the President via personal visit, letter, or phone call. Visitors to the Chancellery are sent to the Office of Citizens Reception, also known as the Citizen's Unit. Letters and calls to the President come through the regular mail and standard phone lines or, more frequently, calls are made and letters are delivered during visits to the Chancellery's Pass Office (Reception) using provided phones or mailboxes.

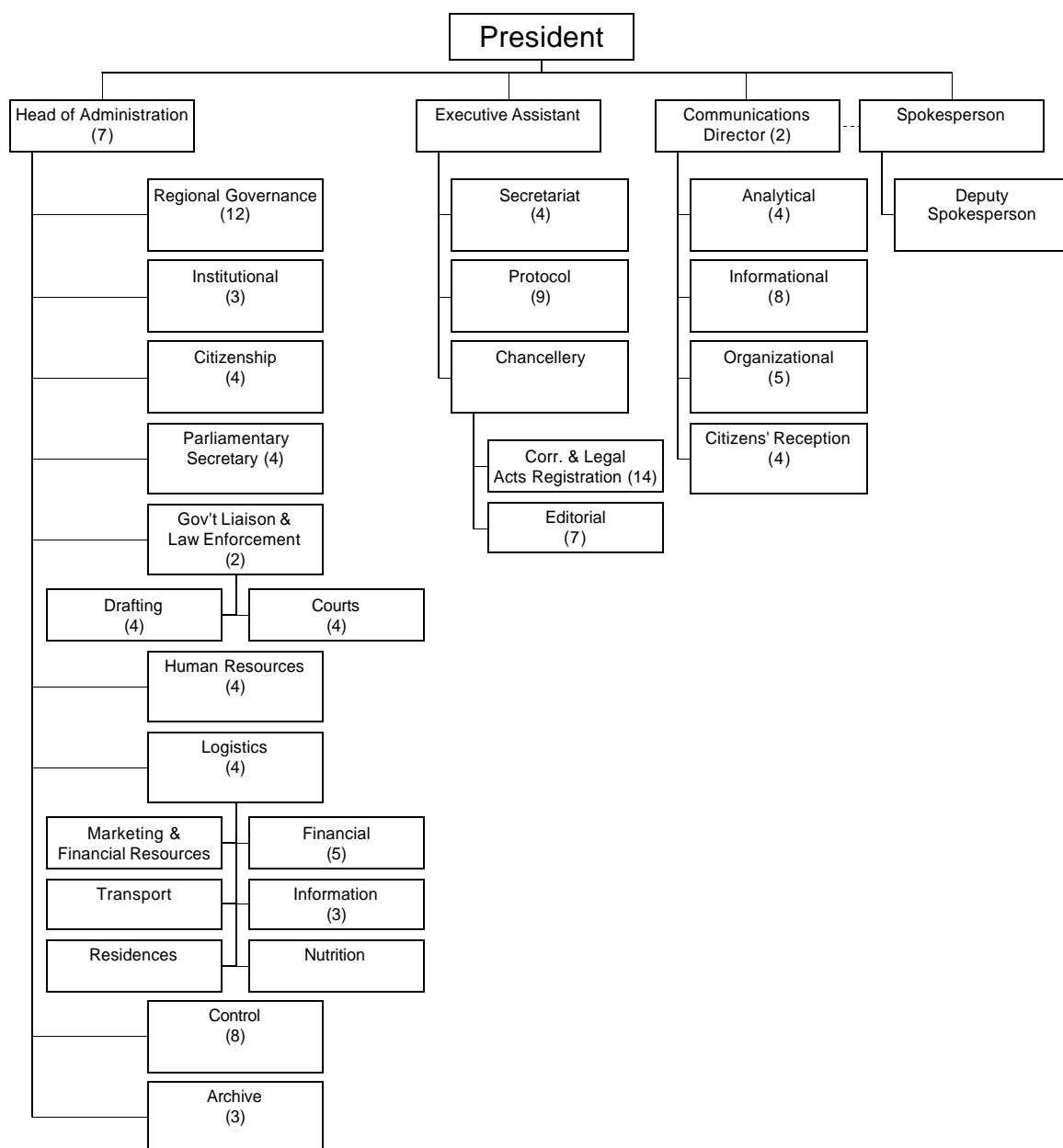
Those who seek a personal visit with the President can meet with a representative of the Office of Citizens Reception. During office hours, this single staff person will meet with citizens; listen to their issue, request, or appeal; and begin to process the request. The office estimates that 80 citizens are granted meetings each day. (That number is not necessarily reliable.) After the initial intake, the inquiries are handled as letters—see below.

Letters are delivered to the Chancellery where they are registered and routed. Approximately 2,000 pieces of mail pass through this office each week. Invitations and international and business correspondence are sent to the Executive Secretariat while individual complaints, requests, and appeals are sent to the Office of Citizens Reception. This understaffed office is currently under the Department of Mass Media and Public Affairs but was reportedly slated to become its own department in the January reorganization. The four-person operation is responsible for developing responses to all citizen inquiries. Staff members forward requests, appeals, and issues to ministries or local government offices when appropriate.

Phone calls are scattered throughout the Administration. Since all staff phone numbers are posted on the wall of the Chancellery Pass Office, many of the calls to the President go directly to the Executive Assistant's office. These calls take a considerable amount of staff time before callers are eventually instructed to call the Citizens Reception office directly. Once callers reach that office, their complaints, requests, and appeals are handled in the same manner as letters.

Again this system, while functional, is disjointed and in need of drastic restructuring. In many ways, this operation is the face of the Administration and should be treated as such. Citizens need to feel like their concerns are being addressed and that they are being heard. That kind of attention is not currently available. While the personnel in the department are dedicated and capable, they could use an influx of technological and human resources as well as technical assistance.

FIGURE 1: CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



ASSESSMENT OF THE PRESIDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

As is the case with the Prime Minister's Office, the President disseminates, as verbal statements or announcements, much of the information released from the Office. Little information is distributed in written form, and almost no information is communicated strategically.

The President's Communications Advisor has been restructuring the communications office and has been addressing many of these issues. The recent appointment of a spokesperson with significant experience and the trust of the President should strengthen this office even further.

President's Communication Staff: (21 staff excluding the reception department which receives citizens, letters and phone calls and is scheduled to be relocated). The office is managed by the President's Communications Advisor, who has an assistant; and includes a recently hired spokesperson.

Informational Department (8 staff):

- Prepare press releases and speech transcripts
- Staff photographer and cameraman
- Monitor Georgian television and web

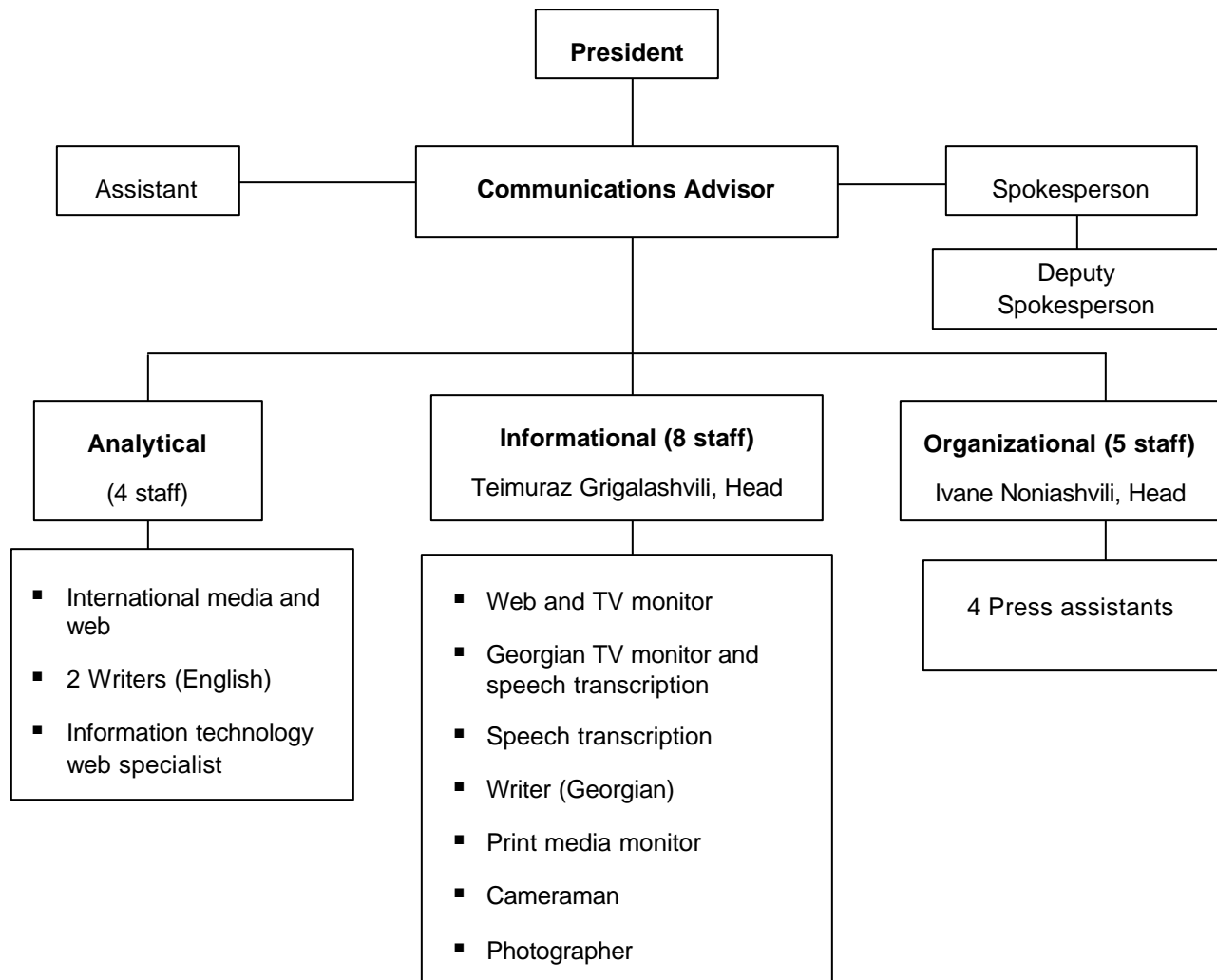
Analytical Department: (3 recently hired staff):

- Monitor Russian western media
- Maintain website

Organizational Department (5 staff):

- Issue press credentials
- Coordinate press conferences

FIGURE 2: ORGANIZATION CHART: PRESIDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Updating the structure of the Office of the President would enable more information sharing, balanced responsibility, a forum for accountability, and increased morale. This proposed model includes a Chief of Staff, a Secretariat, and five Directorates to accomplish the administrative, political, and governmental mission of the President. The Director of each Directorate would report to the Chief of Staff.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Appointing and empowering one person to head the operation would consolidate decision-making authority and free the President from numerous managerial duties. A Chief of Staff could serve as an extension of the principal in some aspects by handling phone calls and meetings as necessary. However, the Chief of Staff's primary role would be to consolidate and improve overall management of the operations.

SECRETARIAT

Ideally, the Executive Secretariat would be a four-person team, headed by an Executive Secretary that reports to the Chief of Staff.

- **Executive Secretary.** The Executive Secretary would handle the President's immediate and personal needs, oversee today's and tomorrow's schedule, manage the call list (list of people who have called the principal or proactive calls requested by the principal or key staff), place calls while the President is in the office, and attend to last minute requests.
- **Scheduler.** One person should be tasked to perform near- and long-term scheduling, leaving the Executive Secretary to handle day-of and next-day changes. All requests would be funneled to the Scheduler whose responsibilities would include receiving incoming requests, reviewing requests with appropriate staff and the principal, rejecting or forwarding certain requests, coordinating logistics for meetings with Security and Protocol, and sharing information with necessary staff.

Another way to organize scheduling would be to have one scheduler who handled foreign travel and one who handled in-country activities. This would ensure that the majority of events fell under one person, the domestic scheduler, but he or she would be free of dealing with international logistics.

- **Special Assistant.** Many operations benefit from the appointment of a Special Assistant (informally known as the Body Person) who travels with the President, attends (but does not participate in) all meetings, ensures that briefing materials are prepared, tracks and addresses VIP requests, and communicates with appropriate staff to ensure follow-up. This is typically a junior staff member who reports to the Chief of Staff, but enjoys the complete trust of the President. This person could serve many functions designed to make more efficient use of the President's time and produce greater staff follow-up.
- **Chief Writer.** The Chief Writer would handle the President's personal and official correspondence. Other departments could continue to draft letters (such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs drafting anniversary or commemorative letters), but this employee would review all final versions and present them to the President for signature.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

This Directorate would run the operations of government within the Office of the President. This division should be able to last from one Administration to another, ensuring continuity of government operations. Departments would include:

- **Operations.** This department would consist of 15 to 20 people in teams that would handle building and communications operations including maintenance, transportation, phone, and utility services.
- **Legal.** This group of 5 to 10 attorneys and support staff would oversee drafting of proposed laws and initiatives and would coordinate all legal efforts including court actions, challenges, and reviews.
- **Public Reception.** This department of 5 to 7 people would handle individual communication with those citizens who attempt to contact the President via letter, phone, and personal visit. Eventually, this team will respond to incoming email as well.
- **Human Resources.** This department of 3 to 5 people would oversee the civil service workforce. It would develop and maintain job descriptions and competencies, administer testing, and run payroll and benefits operations.
- **Procurement.** This team of 5 to 10 specialists and support staff would oversee the supplies, accounts, and buildings of the Office of the President.
- **Information Technology.** A team of 3 to 5 information technology specialists would install, maintain, and continue to develop the technological needs of the Office of the President.
- **Clerical.** This department of 5 to 7 people would provide secretarial services and support for other offices. This unit would also receive and route general incoming calls should a phone system be developed.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

This Directorate, of 21 people, should provide support in promoting the President's agenda in the fields of foreign and international policy with a view of securing Georgia's position in the world. The President's communication staff should ensure that the President's activities are integrated into the overall domestic and international communication strategy.

DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This Directorate of 4 to 7 people would assist the President with international responsibilities. Within the Directorate, regional desks would work closely with the Prime Minister's Foreign Affairs Directorate and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Staff would prepare for official visits; prepare for international trips; communicate with foreign governments, NGOs, and donor organizations; and coordinate efforts such as Euro-integration.

DIRECTOR OF DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

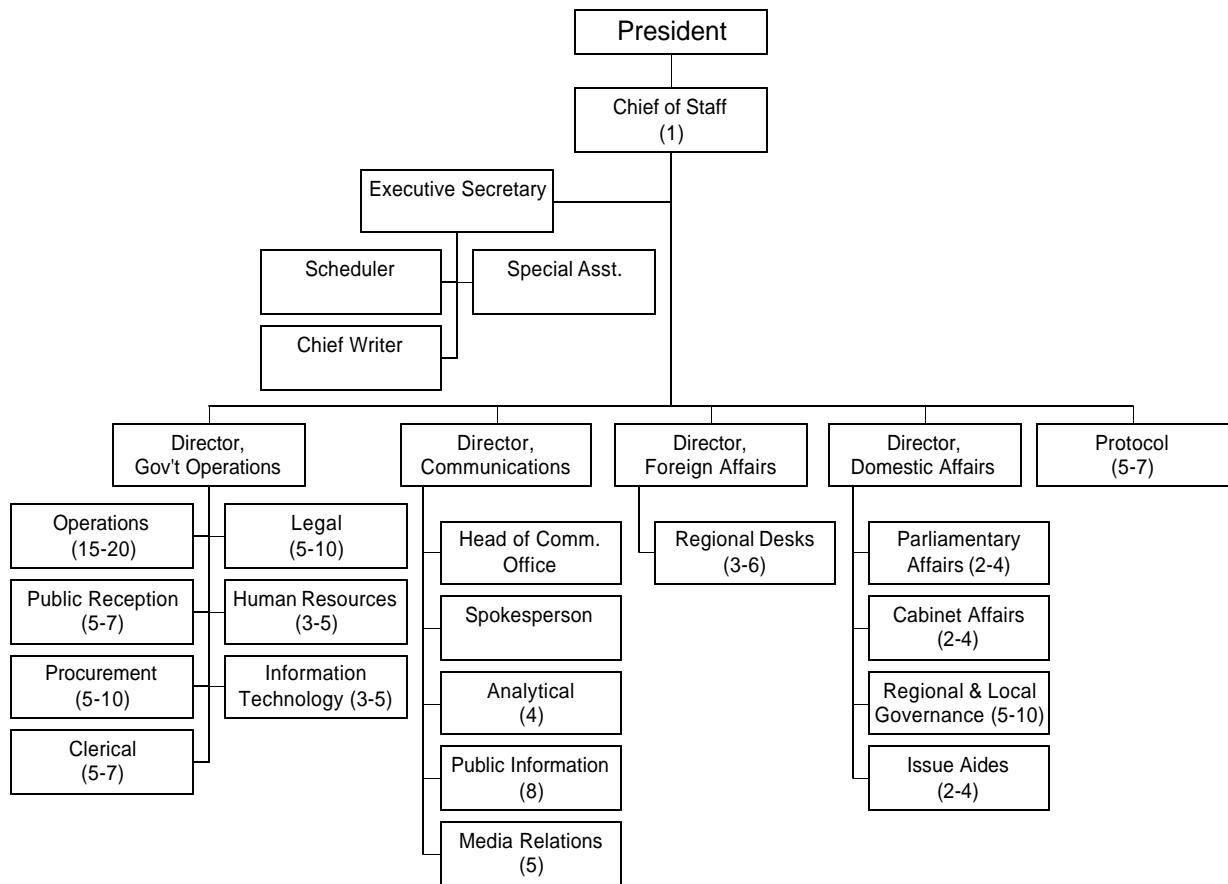
This Directorate would oversee the development and implementation of the President's domestic agenda. This unit would consist of four Departments including policy and political professionals.

- **Parliamentary Affairs.** This department of 2 to 4 people would handle relations with Parliament and would enable the President to be fully apprised of the actions and opinions of individual MPs as well as the body as a whole.
- **Cabinet Affairs.** This department of 2 to 4 people would help facilitate effective communications between the Office of the President and the Ministries both in and out of the President's portfolio.
- **Regional and Local Governance.** Consisting of 5 to 10 people, this department would coordinate communications and efforts with regional offices and governments, including mayors and other local officials. Regional conflict resolution would be handled out of this office as well.
- **Issue Aides.** This group of 2 to 4 professional analysts would assist the President and his administration in formulating and adapting public policy. They would work closely with, not replace, Ministerial staff.

DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL

This Directorate of 5 to 7 specialists would prepare for the President's upcoming meetings and events by performing advance work, gathering information, coordinating logistics, and preparing logistical briefing materials.

FIGURE 3: MODEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



RECOMMENDATIONS: OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

The following recommendations are meant to improve accountability and flow of information throughout the Office of the President thereby increasing the effectiveness of the entire operation.

RESTRUCTURE OVERALL ORGANIZATION

In an effort to improve communication, follow-up, efficiency, and effectiveness, the Office of the President could be restructured from the current form into a team that includes a Chief of Staff, a Secretariat, and five Directorates. To accomplish this restructuring, the President would need to appoint and empower a Chief of Staff, appoint a Director of Domestic Affairs, and appoint a Director of Foreign Affairs.

APPOINT AND EMPOWER A CHIEF OF STAFF

As previously described, the current structure of the President's office includes several people who report directly to the President and two people who serve as senior managers. This structure results in the President serving as the Chief of Staff, which restricts the potential effectiveness and efficiency of the entire operation. To consolidate and improve overall management of the operation, the Chief of Staff could perform many of the following functions:

- Hire and fire staff;
- Ensure accountability of and improve communication between Directors by holding regular meetings;
- Assist the President in reviewing and addressing priorities—to ensure that progress is being made toward long-term objectives;
- Handle daily management problems—so these stay off of the President's desk;
- Assist the President in ensuring follow-up—to free him for more immediate issues;
- Apprise the President of activities in all Departments—this will cut down on the number and length of briefings he receives;
- Oversee the schedule to ensure that reactive and proactive needs are met; and
- Perform other additional duties as appropriate.

APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF DOMESTIC AFFAIRS

This Directorate would consolidate the existing offices of Parliamentary Secretary, Regional Governance, and others that deal with domestic affairs. This Directorate would handle relations with Parliament, the ministries, and local and regional governments. Additionally, the Directorate would include a small number of policy assistants who would assist the President with developing and analyzing policy and liaise with their counterparts in the Ministries.

APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This Directorate would consist of a group of regional desks who would assist the President in all international efforts including coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Director of

Protocol on all visits and trips. Much of this work is currently handled in the office of the Executive Assistant; these personnel would continue to be a key part of this operation.

STRENGTHEN THE PRESIDENT'S SECRETARIAT

Staff interviews indicate that the structure of the Executive Office requires the President to do work that could be better handled by staff. Such work includes handling follow-up on simple issues and communicating relevant information to staff. This structure also permits an inefficient scheduling system that causes staff to waste precious time making excessive changes to the schedule. There are several possible structural changes that, if instituted, could enable the President to rid himself of some tasks, freeing up more time to address weightier policy issues.

Ideally, the Secretariat would be a four-person team, headed by the Executive Secretary who reports to the Chief of Staff. The other team members would be the Scheduler, the Special Assistant, and the Chief Writer. To develop this structure, the office would have to appoint a Director of Scheduling, appoint a Special Assistant to serve as the President's 'right hand', and appoint a Chief Writer.

APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF SCHEDULING

Several people currently handle the President's schedule. As a result, the President ends up serving as scheduler by involving himself in logistics instead of limiting involvement to priority determination. Additionally, staff are kept out of the loop and are not informed of meetings outside their portfolio. To address this problem, either one person should be tasked to specifically deal with the near- and long-term scheduling or one scheduler could handle foreign travel and one could handle in-country activities.

APPOINT A SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO SERVE AS THE PRESIDENT'S 'RIGHT HAND'

The current structure has different individuals assisting the President for different meetings. Additionally, it appears that the President often meets with individual Ministers or MPs without staff present. These facts seem to indicate that, with the exception of the President himself, there is no continuity of knowledge within the operation. In most cases, this either cause the President to spend too much time keeping staff up to date or it results in staff being uninformed, thereby increasing the chances of important items falling through the cracks.

Many operations benefit from the appointment of a Special Assistant (Body Person) who could serve many of the following functions that are designed to make more efficient use of the President's time and ensuring greater staff follow-up:

- Travel aide—attending to the President's needs while on the road both in country and internationally;
- Preparation—ensuring that the appropriate staff provides the President all necessary briefing materials in the proper format and on time;
- Follow-up—ensuring that all relevant staff are kept in the loop about information, commitments, and resolutions resulting from meetings and phone calls; and
- VIP monitoring—many VIP (the President's personal friends, relatives, key political and business contacts, etc.) requests can be handled at the staff level; the Special Assistant can serve as the consistent contact person for this type of request. In many operations, the Chief of Staff would handle this role, but his or her time is usually better spent addressing other matters.

APPOINT A CHIEF WRITER

One of the main duties of the President's Secretariat is to handle his personal and official correspondence. These duties are currently handled well by the office of the Executive Assistant, but restructuring would move this position to the newly designed Secretariat to fall under the supervision of the Chief of Staff.

REORGANIZE CITIZENS RECEPTION DEPARTMENT

This Department is currently under the supervision of the Communications Director, but it should be relocated to be under the direction of the Head of Administration. This move has been discussed, but has not been implemented yet. A plan should be developed to add staff and technology to maximize the effectiveness of this unit and to improve constituent service. These actions would also increase the productivity of other departments, such as the Executive Secretariat, that spend a great deal of time on citizen complaints even though they are unable to provide the best service to those citizens. Specific improvements could include:

- Improving signage in Citizens Reception office—simple improvements in signage would reduce the number of phone calls to the wrong departments and better serve citizens by getting them started correctly;
- Revamping letter tracking software—plans are in place to improve the letter tracking software and consultants can help improve that design;
- Improving letter response system—templates can improve citizen responses and increase the unit's productivity; and
- Consolidating all letter writing under one Department—the Executive Secretariat should not need to coordinate letter writing with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Citizens Reception Department, even allowing for Executive Assistant review, can handle that action.

PRESIDENT'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The President's Communications Office has developed an effective rapport with the international media and is successfully directing its focus to one of Georgia's principal goals, that of territorial integrity. The current communications advisor has devoted significant effort to restructuring the office and the SNG project has worked closely with the staff, advising them over the course of this project. Staff members do require further training in writing, strategic communication, and office management. Specific recommendations include the following:

- Completing job descriptions and conducting an assessment of existing staff;
- Creating a Head of the Communications Office position, to be responsible for day-to-day management of the staff, with the advisor (or spokesperson) providing policy direction;
- Restructuring and renaming divisions—the Organizational division could more descriptively become Media Relations and the Informational division could be renamed the Public Information;
- Increasing the division heads' capability to function as deputy heads of communication; and
- Continuing staff training in writing and strategic communication.

ASSESSMENT: OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

The Office of the Prime Minister comprises a Secretariat and three divisions, with managers (and some other employees) reporting directly to the Prime Minister. These managers are adjusting to the new Prime Minister but appear to be off to a strong start. The new Prime Minister seems to be inclined to keep most of the existing staff together. It is, however, an opportune time to make necessary structural changes to the organization.

Like the President's office, the Prime Minister's operation has a severe imbalance of managerial responsibilities. Roughly 60 percent of the employees are in the Head of State Chancellery's operation. These employees perform duties ranging from preparing the agenda for the government meetings to building management and procurement. This imbalance could be easily countered by a more even and sensible division of responsibilities.

MANAGEMENT

While the operation has a Chief of Office, it does not employ a true Chief of Staff—one trusted person whose primary function is to help the Prime Minister address day-to-day issues without losing focus on the big picture and who also serves as a manager to whom all other staff eventually report, even if those other staff have direct access to the Prime Minister. The Chief of Office seems to hold many of those responsibilities, but does not have the full authority to manage the entire operation.

The three division managers do appear to communicate with one another and are working together in pursuit of the Prime Minister's agenda. Each appears to have limited hiring authority, subject to budget restrictions, but lacks the authority to fire or transfer people out of their divisions. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the existing structure and the abilities of their respective staff. A few structural changes could make more time available for these managers and their staff to assist in the development of ideas and execution of policy goals.

STAFFING

Senior staff members appear to be extremely busy dealing with the problems of the day. However, more junior staff seem to lack direction and are eager to take on more responsibility and additional projects. A complete portfolio of all employees, senior and junior, could address this.

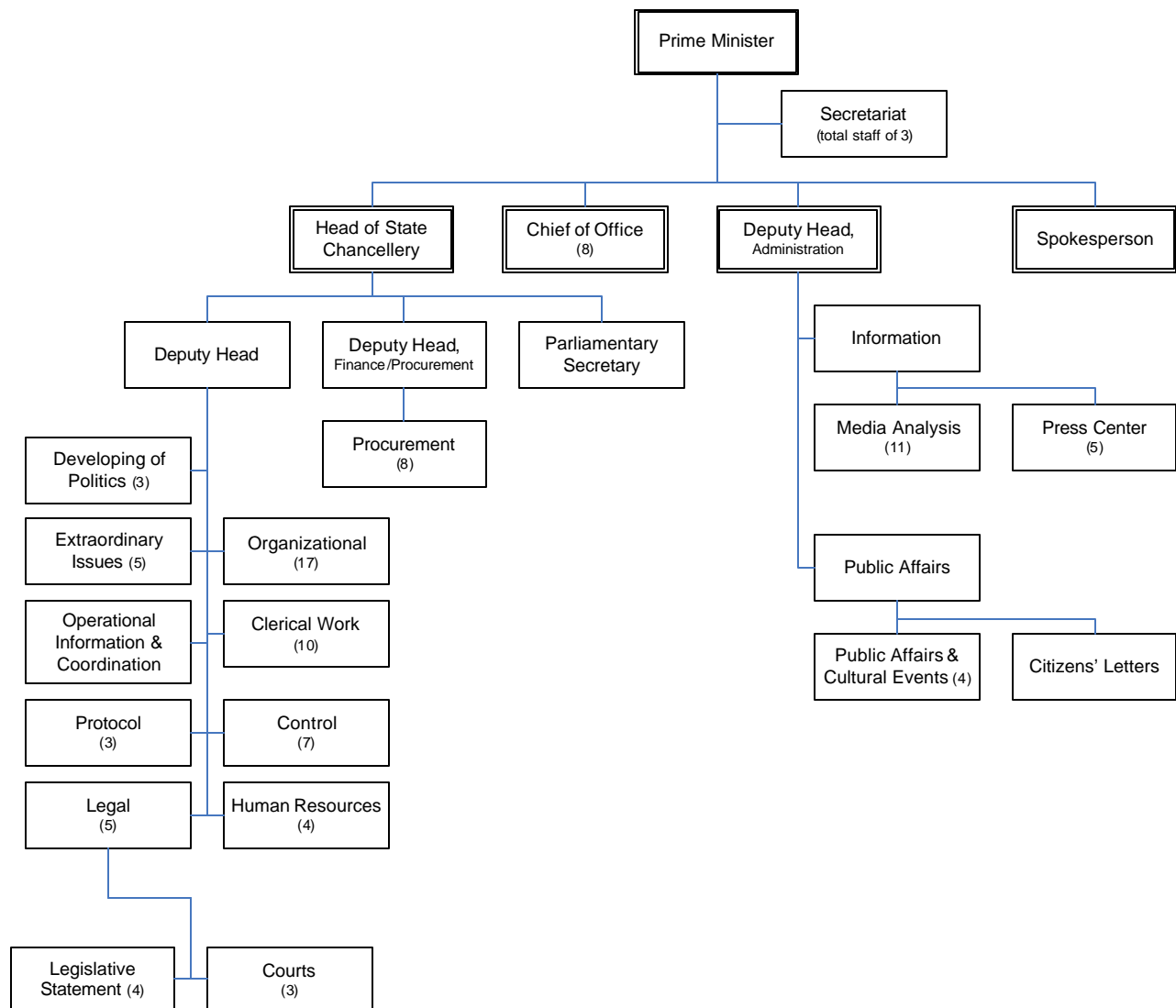
Additionally, the Prime Minister's employees lack job descriptions to help bring focus to their work. Too many employees are unclear as to their exact responsibilities. That, combined with the absence of a civil service testing system for minimum competencies, is a situation that must be addressed. Some employees were very difficult to locate as they spend little, if any, time actually working and lack reliable communication equipment. A civil service testing system would make it much easier for senior managers to rid themselves of non-productive employees.

PROCEDURES

As with the President, the Prime Minister directs the schedule and routinely makes changes to that schedule. This operation could be much more effective if it were reworked into an integrated system that included all members of the Prime Minister's and President's senior staff.

Additionally, the Prime Minister does not have a Special Assistant—a right-hand person always at the Prime Minister's side helping to manage the day, taking notes, making phone calls, and so on. Instead, the burden of follow-up and information dissemination often falls on the Chief of Office who certainly could find better uses of her time.

FIGURE 4: CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER



TECHNOLOGY

As in the President's administration, technological limitations make intra-office communication extremely difficult. Most staff members have email but they are forced to rely on unreliable and painfully slow dial-up Internet access. They lack adequate fax machines, fax lines, and phones. Employees communicate via cell phone because most offices are equipped with antiquated office telephones with neither answering machines nor a voice mail system. Further, those departments surveyed are unable to forward calls within their own suite of offices much less to other departments or units.

This inability to communicate cripples productivity by causing duplication of effort and wasted time. It also hinders office efficiency and morale by creating a culture of disparate departments instead of

one cohesive operation. Because departments are not kept apprised of the activities and successes of other departments, they tend to become insulated, caring only about their specific portfolios. Most people in the Prime Minister's operation have no idea what their colleagues do and are not able to point citizens in the right direction with ease. Better intra-office communications would lead to a more efficient, cohesive operation. Should the President's office eventually move to a new building, the Prime Minister's team would take over the current Chancellery and new systems could be installed.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMUNICATIONS OFFICES

As the Prime Minister is responsible for the administration of the government and for the implementation of policy reforms in cooperation with government ministries, his chancellery should provide leadership in the dissemination of information on these reforms to the public. Government has an obligation to inform and educate the public about its activities as part of the routine course of governing.

Much of the information disclosed from the Prime Minister's office has been announced directly by the Prime Minister. For the most part, the Prime Minister has operated as his own spokesperson (a staff spokesperson was hired in January). Little information is distributed in written form, and almost no information is communicated strategically (with the exception of recent efforts on tax reform and the anniversary of the Rose Revolution). Communication within the government has been predominantly top down and horizontal among the President, Prime Minister, ministers, and a few senior staff.

Senior staff, for the most part, function as aides, taking and relaying instructions to lower level staff, rather than serving as advisors, or as managers of divisions or departments. Though eager and loyal, few staff appear to demonstrate initiative (at either senior or junior levels), or actually manage lower-level staff. It is unclear whether staff lack only management authority, or ability (which could possibly be addressed through training), or potential (which cannot be addressed through training). Currently, there are no structured or regularly scheduled staff meetings, few management systems, and little evidence of job descriptions.

There has been little communication and information sharing among units. Many staff have little knowledge of other unit's functions or of what staff in other units produce. Quite a number of staff interviewed claimed that information did not need to be shared among staff; instead, they could learn of government activities on television. Almost all staff in the Prime Minister's office, when asked, saw no need to share or receive monitoring information, nor understood the function of monitoring as a tool of analysis, and analysis as a function of a strategic operation.

There is an uneven distribution of workload. Some of the junior staff have considerable idle time (or produce uninformative and unread reports), while upper-level staff are overworked, responding to the daily needs of the Prime Minister, who retains substantial and wide ranging decision-making authority.

Considerable labor is expended to produce reports that are seen by few, provide little useful information, and are not valuable to the few who receive them. The reports and analyses produced by the Media and Analysis Unit (of the Information Department) and the Citizens' Letters and Information Unit¹ (of the Public Affairs Department) are quite detailed and verbose, and contain little analysis. There is no evidence that these reports were seen by anyone other than the Prime Minister

¹ This unit "analyses" but does not answer letters.

(with the exception of the monthly ministry reports, about which the staff admit they have received little acknowledgement) or that they were used to inform decision making in policy development or communication other than what the Prime Minister himself might have consumed and analyzed.

The four members of the Public Affairs and Cultural Events Unit (of the Public Affairs Department), responsible for NGO relations and public outreach, show little evidence of activity. This may be due, in large part to a lack of leadership (currently, the Head of Public Affairs position is vacant) and to a perception among the staff that they must have funds to proceed with any outreach program, which is not necessarily true.

The Press Center (of the Information Department) is responsible for arranging logistics with the media, and there is little evidence that staff do other than react to requests of the media or the Prime Minister. They do not appear to produce written news releases though that function is within their mandate.

Prime Minister's Communication Staff: (31 staff, including the Head of the Information Department, Press Secretary, and Deputy Head of Administration in the Office of the Prime Minister, who oversees the department of information and the department of public affairs. The Head of Public Affairs position is vacant.)

Information Department: Media and Analysis (11 staff):

- Daily news clippings from the 14 Georgian papers
- Daily synopsis of television coverage of four Georgian stations
- Weekly analysis of print media coverage
- Monthly analysis of print media coverage for each ministry

Information Department: Press Center Branch (5 staff):

- Annual issuance of press credentials
- Coordination of press conferences
- Preparation of press releases
- Staff photographer

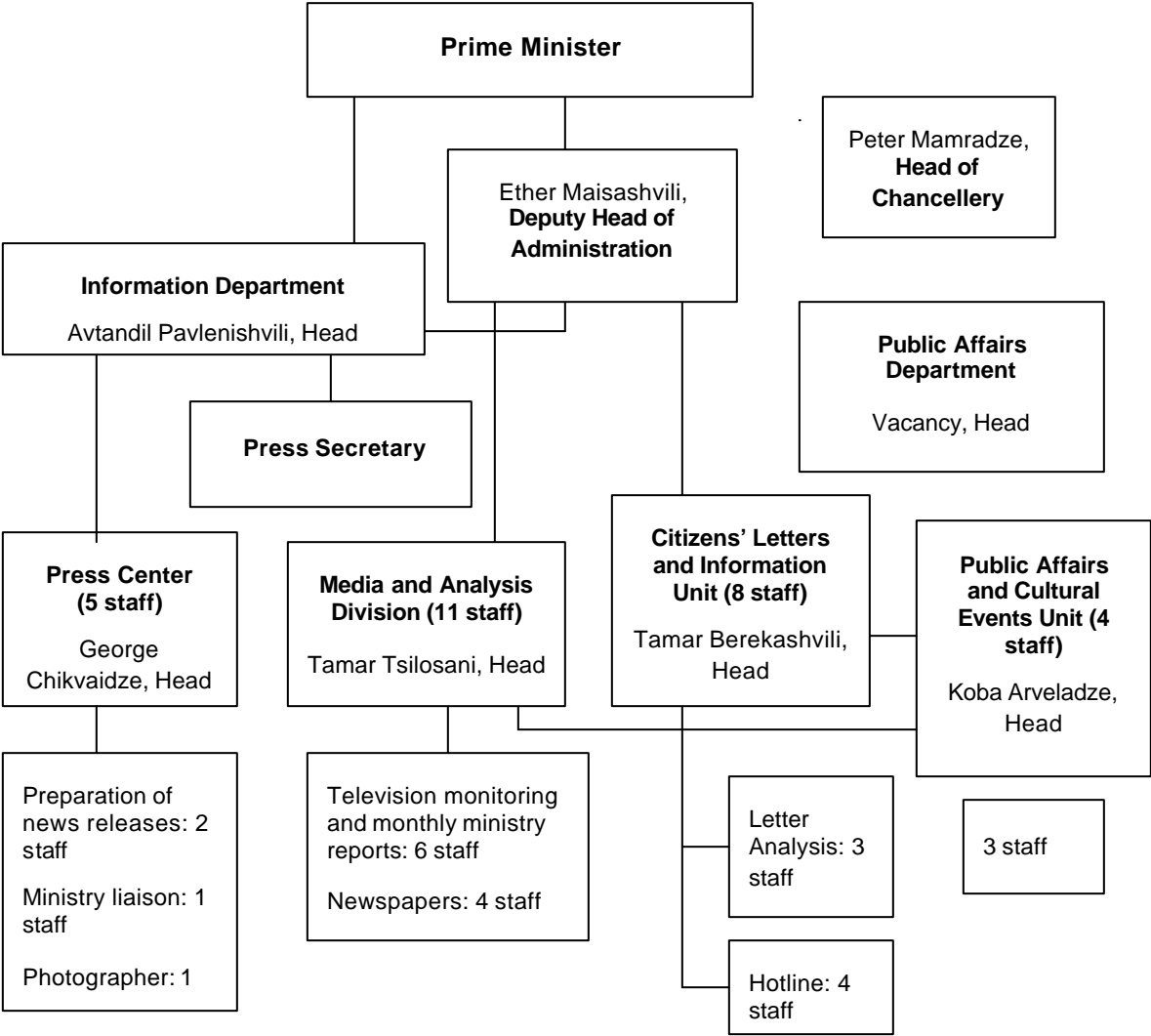
Department of Public Affairs: Citizens' Letters and Information Unit (4 staff plus 4 on contract):

- Operation of "hotline" (4 contract staff) to receive citizens' calls
- Weekly and monthly analysis of phone calls and letters received
- Occasional phone surveys of public opinion

Department of Public Affairs: The Public Affairs and Cultural Events Unit (4 staff):

- This unit is responsible for relations with NGOs and for the dissemination of public information.

FIGURE 5: FUNCTIONAL ORGANIZATION CHART: PRIME MINISTER’S COMMUNICATION OFFICES



INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN: OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

There are many possible organizational models to consult when devising an organizational model for the Prime Minister's office. Ideally, the model will take into account the size and structure of the current organization and consider the goals of the current administration. The following model was developed to provide balance of responsibility and to create a sense of team that is lacking from the current operation. This structure is designed to enable all members of the Office of the Prime Minister to feel as if they are part of the team and that their performance helps to accomplish the overall goals of the operation. It is remarkably similar to the President's model structure because their needs are nearly identical.

The ideal model would include a Chief of Staff, a Secretariat, and five Directorates to accomplish the administrative, political, and governmental mission of the Prime Minister. Each Directorate would include varying numbers of Departments to further divide the workload. This model would create balance in responsibility, encourage the proper flow of information within the Office of the Prime Minister, and provide the Prime Minister with enough time and organization to best perform his duties.

CHIEF OF STAFF

Appointing and empowering one person to head the operation would consolidate decision-making authority and free the Prime Minister from numerous managerial duties. A Chief of Staff could serve as an extension of the principal in some aspects, handling phone calls and meetings as necessary. But, by and large, the primary role would be to consolidate and improve overall management of the operations.

SECRETARIAT

Ideally, the Executive Secretariat would be a four-person team, headed by the Executive Secretary that reports to the Chief of Staff.

- **Executive Secretary.** The Executive Secretary would handle the principal's immediate and personal needs, oversee today's and tomorrow's schedule, manage the call list (list of people who have called the principal or proactive calls requested by the principal or key staff), place calls while the Prime Minister is in the office, and attend to last minute requests.
- **Scheduler.** One person should be tasked to perform near- and long-term scheduling, leaving the Executive Secretary to handle day-of and next-day changes. All requests would be funneled to the Scheduler who whose responsibilities would include receiving incoming requests, reviewing requests with appropriate staff and the principal, rejecting or forwarding certain requests, coordinating logistics for meetings with Security and Protocol, and sharing information with necessary staff.

Another way to address the problem would be to have one scheduler who handled foreign travel and one who handled in-country activities. This would ensure that the majority of events fell under one person, the Domestic Scheduler, but he or she would be free of dealing with international logistics.

- **Special Assistant.** Many operations benefit from the appointment of a Special Assistant (informally known as the Body Person) who travels with the Prime Minister, attends (but does not participate in) all meetings, ensures that briefing materials are prepared, tracks and addresses VIP

requests, and communicates with appropriate staff to ensure follow-up. Typically, this is a junior staff person who reports to the Chief of Staff, but enjoys the complete trust of the Prime Minister. This person could serve many functions that are designed to make more efficient use of the Prime Minister's time and produce greater staff follow-up.

- **Chief Writer.** The Chief Writer would handle the Prime Minister's personal and official correspondence. Other departments could continue to draft letters, but this employee would review all final versions and present them to the Prime Minister for signature.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

This Directorate would run the operations of the Office of the Prime Minister. This division should be able to last from one Administration to another, ensuring continuity of government operations.

Departments would include:

- **Operations.** This department would consist of 15 to 20 people in teams that would handle building and communications operations including maintenance, transportation, phone, and utility services.
- **Legal.** This group of 5 to 10 attorneys and support staff would oversee drafting of proposed laws and initiatives and would coordinate all legal efforts including court actions, challenges, and reviews.
- **Public Reception.** This department of 5 to 7 people would handle individual communication with those citizens who attempt to contact the Prime Minister via letter, phone, and personal visit. Eventually, this team will respond to incoming email as well.
- **Human Resources.** This department of 3 to 5 people would oversee the civil service workforce. It would develop and maintain job descriptions and competencies, administer testing, and run payroll and benefits operations.
- **Procurement.** This team of 5 to 10 specialists and support staff would oversee the supplies, accounts, and buildings of the offices of the Prime Minister and the ministries.
- **Information Technology.** A team of 3 to 5 information technology specialists would install, maintain and continue to develop the technological needs of the Office of the Prime Minister.
- **Clerical.** This department of 5 to 7 people would provide secretarial services and support for other offices. This unit would also receive and route general incoming calls should a phone system be developed.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

This Directorate of 18 to 20 people would coordinate and provide leadership in disseminating information on the implementation of policy reforms to the public. It will also function as an organization that coordinates the activities of the ministry press offices.

The Prime Minister's Communications Offices require considerable assistance to create a credible government press office, that is, an organization that can coordinate and provide assistance to ministry press offices, be a reliable source of information on all government activities for all media, and work aggressively to promote the government's reforms. Most of the recommended improvements for the communications function are directed toward the establishment of a government press office to promote the public agenda, keep the public regularly informed of the government's activities, and maintain a dialog with the public on reforms.

Successful implementation of policy reforms requires a vigorous and strategic communication effort. Three of the government's major policy reform efforts to date: education, tax policy, and privatization have lacked support or been criticized principally for failures in communication rather than for the substantive contents of the reforms. Many of these criticisms can be avoided through the establishment of a strategic communication office (most likely involving a transformation of the current public affairs office), led by an experienced manager and communicator who is involved in policy development and can integrate communication strategy into policy formation. The current information department and public affairs department should operate as a "government press office" with the stature and professional ability to manage communication of policy reforms in cooperation with government ministries.

The lack of written information contributes to the confusion surrounding the reforms. Written communication is essential so that there is no question concerning the government's position on an issue or about the details of a reform. The press office should prepare position papers on each reform to provide background on these complex issues to the media and to the public. This background material should clearly spell out the reform and could be used as a basis from which to develop various other written material to communicate with the public.

The Prime Minister's communication staff should be restructured with the understanding that the dissemination of public information is a fundamental responsibility of government, and that this activity should be institutionalized within the Office of the Prime Minister. Much of this work is routine: media monitoring, setting up news conferences, writing news releases, and so on. The majority of staff, once tested, should receive training to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these operations.

The most difficult tasks are those concerning crisis communication, strategic communication, and integrating communication into policy development and implementation—tasks that require a strong leader with experience in communication and/or strategic thinking. The Prime Minister's communication staff needs guidance from a manager with these skills who will serve as the Prime Minister's Communication Advisor and oversee both the Information and Public Affairs departments. The Prime Minister's Communication Advisor should also have a staff to coordinate media relations and public affairs with ministries.

Each department (Information and Public Affairs) also requires strong leadership. The Information Department should be managed by a Government Communications Official with a background in media relations, and the Public Affairs Department should be managed by a Government Communications Official with a background in public relations.

A Public Affairs Unit should know how to coordinate a public education campaign on tax reform with the Ministry of Finance and other inter-governmental units, and how to communicate to specific target constituencies. Such an effort does not necessarily require a good deal of funding; it does require a good deal of thinking, hard work, and leadership. A public relations firm could be hired to assist the Public Affairs Department in its initial reorganization, and can help train staff who may not have a communication background, but display initiative, a willingness to learn, and enthusiasm to communicate.

DIRECTOR OF CABINET AFFAIRS

The primary mission of the Prime Minister is to coordinate the operations of the separate ministries. This Directorate of 8 to 13 people would organize the logistics, agenda, operation, and follow-up of the regular meetings of Ministers and key staff. It would also ensure effective communication between all levels of staff in both the Prime Minister's office and the individual ministries. One

Department would include the Office of Parliamentary Affairs, which would enable the Cabinet to be fully apprised of actions and opinions in Parliament.

DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

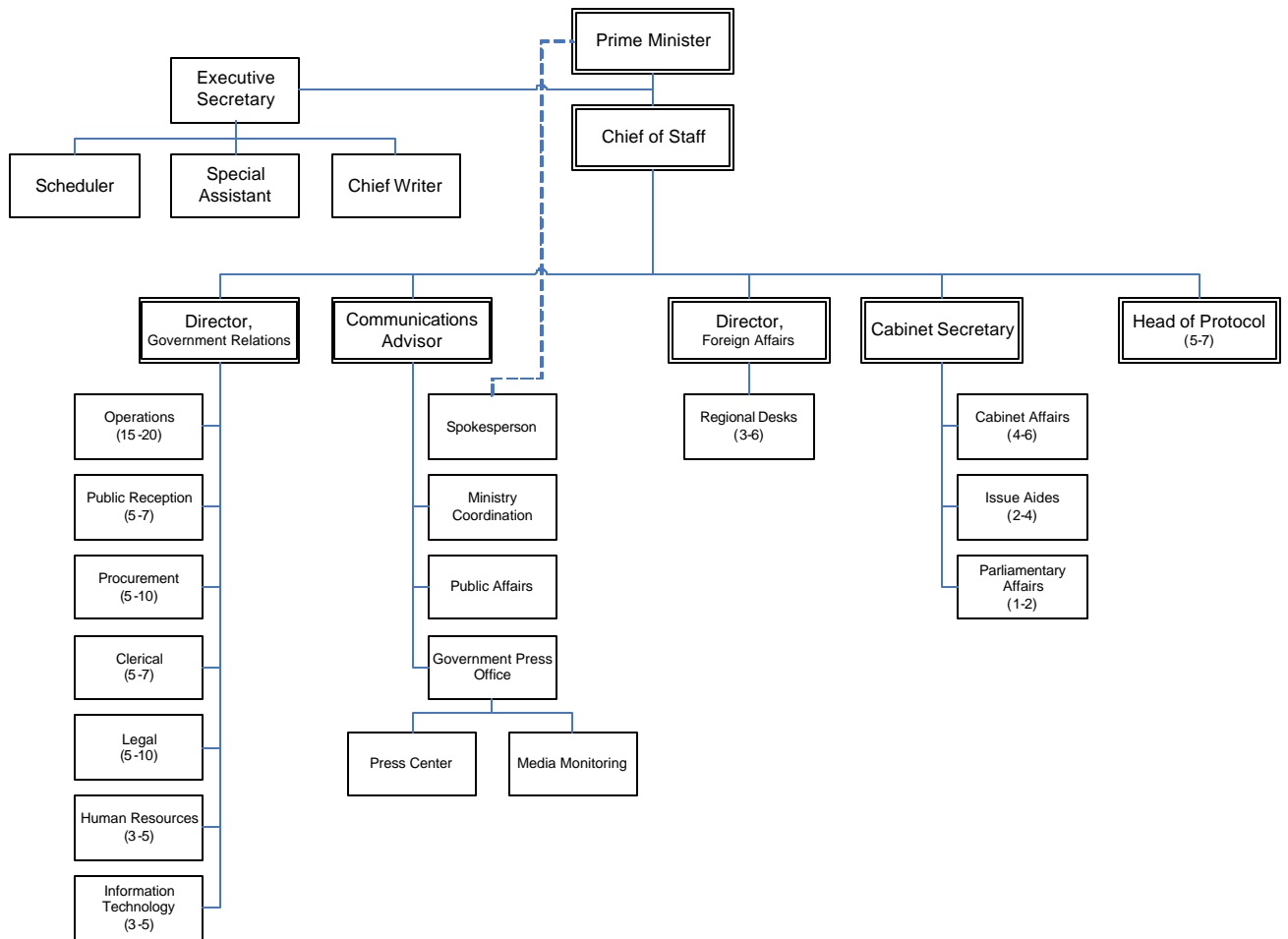
This Directorate of 3 to 5 people would assist the Prime Minister with international responsibilities. Within the Directorate, regional desks would work closely with the President's Foreign Affairs Directorate and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Staff would be responsible for preparing for official visits; preparing for international trips; communicating with foreign governments, NGOs, and donor organizations; and coordinating efforts such as Euro-integration.

DIRECTOR OF PROTOCOL

This Directorate of 5 to 7 specialists would prepare for the Prime Minister's upcoming meetings and events by performing advance work, gathering information, coordinating logistics, and preparing logistical briefing materials.

Greater involvement of senior staff in policy development, and delegation of responsibility to senior staff to manage and be accountable for specific operations could relieve the Prime Minister of much of the management burden and integrate staff so that they could take increased responsibility for policy implementation and the corresponding communication of policy reforms. Restructuring the communication offices would allow the Prime Minister to focus on defining the overall vision and strategy, while relying on staff for implementation of day-to-day activities.

FIGURE 6: MODEL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART: OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER



RECOMMENDATIONS: OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

The following recommendations are meant to improve accountability and flow of information throughout the Office of the Prime Minister thereby increasing the effectiveness of the entire operation.

RESTRUCTURE OVERALL ORGANIZATION

In an effort to improve communication, follow-up, efficiency, and effectiveness, the Office of the Prime Minister could be restructured from the current form into a team that includes a Chief of Staff, a Secretariat, and five Directorates. To accomplish this restructuring, the Prime Minister would need to appoint and empower a Chief of Staff, appoint and elevate a Cabinet Secretary, and appoint a Director of Foreign Affairs.

APPOINT AND EMPOWER A CHIEF OF STAFF

As previously described, the Office of the Prime Minister's current structure includes several people who report directly to the Prime Minister, two people who serve as senior managers, and a third who acts as an advisor. This structure results in the Prime Minister serving as the Chief of Staff, which restricts the potential effectiveness and efficiency of the entire operation. To consolidate and improve overall management of the operations, a Chief of Staff could perform many of the following functions:

- Hire and fire staff;
- Ensure accountability of and improve communication between Directors by holding regular meetings;
- Assist the Prime Minister in reviewing and addressing priorities—to ensure that progress is being made toward long-term objectives;
- Handle daily management problems—so these stay off of the Prime Minister's desk;
- Assist Prime Minister in ensuring follow-up—to free him for more immediate issues;
- Apprise Prime Minister of activities of all Departments—this will cut down on the number and length of briefings he receives;
- Oversee the schedule to ensure that reactive and proactive needs are met; and
- Perform other additional duties as appropriate.

APPOINT AND ELEVATE A CABINET SECRETARY

The Office of the Cabinet Secretary would coordinate all efforts with the ministries including government meetings and meetings of Deputy Ministers. This Directorate would also include a small number of policy assistants who would assist the Prime Minister in policy development and comprehension. Finally, an Office of Parliamentary Affairs would assist the Prime Minister in maintaining relations with Parliament.

APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

This Directorate would consist of a group of regional desks that would assist the Prime Minister in all international efforts, including coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Protocol on all visits and trips.

STRENGTHEN THE PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARIAT

The traditional duties of a Secretariat are performed by the Prime Minister's current Secretariat as well as by staff under the supervision of the Chief of Prime Minister's Office. This operation would be more effective were it to be consolidated into one unit. To develop this structure, the office would have to appoint a Director of Scheduling, appoint a Special Assistant to serve as the Prime Minister's 'right hand', and appoint a Chief Writer.

APPOINT A DIRECTOR OF SCHEDULING

A Scheduler should handle all scheduling requests and changes, produce and disseminate weekly and monthly schedules, and communicate logistical information with Security and Protocol. Either one person should be tasked to specifically deal with the near- and long-term scheduling or one scheduler could handle foreign travel and one could handle in-country activities.

APPOINT A SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO SERVE AS THE PRIME MINISTER'S 'RIGHT HAND' PERSON

Many operations benefit from the appointment of a Special Assistant (informally known as the Body Person) who could serve many of the following functions designed to save the Prime Minister from using his time to disseminate information:

- Travel aide—attending to the Prime Minister's needs while on the road both in country and internationally;
- Preparation—ensuring that the appropriate staff provides the Prime Minister all necessary briefing materials in the proper format and on time;
- Follow-up—ensuring that all relevant staff are kept in the loop about information, commitments, and resolutions resulting from meetings and phone calls.
- VIP monitoring— Many VIP (the Prime Minister's personal friends, relatives, key political and business contacts, etc.) requests can be handled at the staff level; the Special Assistant can serve as the consistent contact person for this type of request. In many operations, the Chief of Staff would handle this role, but his or her time is usually better spent addressing other matters.

APPOINT A CHIEF WRITER

One of the main duties of the Secretariat is to handle his personal and official correspondence. These duties are currently handled well in the Chief of Prime Minister's office, but restructuring would move this position to the newly designed Secretariat, which would fall under the supervision of the Chief of Staff.

REORGANIZE CITIZENS' LETTERS AND INFORMATION UNIT

This staff should be relocated into the Government Operations Directorate to provide a better service to the citizenry. This group should be developed into a unit that receives constituent complaints and

requests and coordinates responses in much the same manner that the President's Citizens' Reception office does.

COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

The Communications Office requires extensive restructuring to create an effective organization. Specific recommendations include the following:

- Develop job descriptions and conduct an assessment of existing staff;
- Hire a Communications Advisor to the Prime Minister;
- Create a staff unit under the Communication Advisor to coordinate media relations and public affairs with ministries;
- Hire a Head of Public Affairs Department to coordinate strategic communication;
- Add staff in the Public Affairs Department and reduce staff in the Media Monitoring Unit;
- Create a strategic communication function in the Public Affairs Department;
- Transfer the hotline staff to a Reception Department to respond to citizen calls and reassign the Letters and Information Unit—those who respond to letters can also be responsible for analyzing letters;
- Reorganize the Media Monitoring Unit to produce relevant and timely analyses.

The Deputy Head of Administration and/or the Head of the Information Department could proceed with the following steps as an initial effort in the restructuring.

- Restructure the information department into a government press office.
 - Media Monitoring: Reform the Media Monitoring Unit into one that (1) provides the Prime Minister with the media information he requires on a daily basis, and (2) provides only analysis that can be incorporated into policy making and media strategy development. Conduct an assessment with ministers to determine which ministries currently perform their own media analysis and assess the value of the monthly media monitoring report provided to each ministry. Determine whether ministers and/or their press assistants find the reports useful in determining media strategy, and whether monitoring could be centralized in the Prime Minister's office and provided to all ministries.
 - Press Center: Interview ministers to determine in what manner the Prime Minister's Communications Office could assist them in their media relations and in the promotion of public sector reforms. Is there basic information on the government that the Prime Minister's Press Office should routinely provide the national and international media? Does the government have written positions on certain policies—tax reform, education reform, privatization, foreign affairs—that the Prime Minister's Press Office could produce and provide to the media to promote the government's reform efforts?
- Restructure the Public Affairs Department into a public outreach office that seeks to educate the public on the government's reforms by producing and distributing printed material, targeting audiences and the placement of speakers, and organizing seminars and media appearances.
- The unit that analyzes letters and responds to phone calls should be combined with the units in another department that actually answer the letters and work directly with citizens who come to the

chancellery with their concerns. Many of the letters, phone calls, and individual appearances by citizens concern social services and public utilities, and should be handled by staff trained in these issues. The press and public affairs staff are not trained in social services or in citizen contact, nor should they be; these staff require a different skill set, in media and public affairs.

- The President's Communications Advisor has previously organized meetings of the press officers of all the ministries but there is no regular coordination, and the group is rather large. Coordination with a smaller group whose ministers are more involved in major policy issues that are of particular importance to the public would be more productive and would help focus strategic coordination. Ideally, the Prime Minister's Communication Advisor should take the lead in this coordination. A regular weekly meeting with the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Justice, Economy, and Foreign Affairs, at a minimum is suggested. A set agenda can be developed that would include discussion on items such as urgent issues, issues for the week, a review of last week's coverage, and planning for upcoming events.

RECOMMENDATIONS: BOTH OFFICES

CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS

The following recommendations are meant to improve Chancellery operations by creating a standardized civil service system. Employees and managers will be more effective when they are fully aware of their duties and responsibilities.

DRAFT JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR EVERY EMPLOYEE AND MANAGER

A small number of employees have job descriptions. Only slightly more have a complete idea of what is expected of them. Far too many are unsure of their roles. Written job descriptions would help define roles and expectations. Managers should draft complete descriptions. Well-written descriptions can be a great help in ensuring accountability during employee reviews. These descriptions are best written by managers (with assistance from consultants if necessary) and reviewed with their employees and senior managers.

CONDUCT A FULL PORTFOLIO REVIEW

While drafting job descriptions, managers could work with consultants to assess the duties, projects, and responsibilities in their entire department. Since most managers are overworked and most staff are underutilized, this exercise can be used to identify opportunities for delegation. Once descriptions are drafted and agreed upon, and portfolios are reviewed, further structural adjustments can be made.

INITIATE A CIVIL SERVICE TESTING SYSTEM

Once structural changes are completed, a comprehensive civil service testing system should be devised and implemented. This system will enable managers to evaluate staff and to ensure the best service for the Georgian citizens. Implementation will be difficult as many employees (and managers) will be fearful of failure but, once a testing system is in place, it can be given to prospective hires and used during employee reviews and for disciplinary purposes. This is a large-scale, long-term project, but it is an essential step in the professional growth of the Chancellery.

Ideally, this system won't be limited to the Chancellery, but would be extended to the Ministries and regional offices as well. The Justice Ministry has developed a program that is worthy of review with the intent of applying government-wide. As previously mentioned, the President's Head of Administration had indicated a desire to begin a testing system this past January but, as of this writing, no actual plans for testing had been announced.

STAFF TRAINING

A large number of training needs have been identified, including basic public administration, employee management, and general office conduct.

We met with four local service providers with experience in public sector training to assess their current training programs and the degree to which they might be flexible in providing customized training for staff of the President and Prime Minister's communication offices. These providers were recommended during discussions with staff and with individuals from international organizations.

The use of local service providers is recommended for a number of reasons: to support Georgian NGOs and training organizations (some of which are or have been supported by the U.S. Agency for

International Development), to help integrate the staff into the NGO and academic community, and to allow Georgians to be trained by Georgians in Georgian, thereby avoiding cultural learning curves, the need to translate material, and the need to assess whether the material is appropriate to the culture and the situation. The SNG project is prepared to work with local training providers to organize custom training for staff. The four local organizations considered in this report are:

- The Georgian Institute of Public Administration (GIPA), <http://www.gipa.ge>, with whom the U.S. Government has a long standing relationship, and with whom the Georgian government and President and Prime Minister's offices should have an ongoing training arrangement;
- The Centre for Training and Consultancy (CTC), <http://www.ctc.org.ge>, a local NGO that provides training in professional administration and office management, strategic management, project cycle management, and team building; they are introducing a program for mid- and high-level public officials on skills for strategic advisors;
- The Institute for Polling and Marketing (IPM), <http://www.ipm.ge>, a for-profit business that appears to provide the most advanced local training and consulting in communication; and
- The Civil Society Institute (CSI), <http://www.civilin.org>, a local NGO that provided training in public policy analysis and public administration to approximately 50 employees of the Ministries of Finance, Economy, Education, and Environment in 2004.

As the Georgian democratic system is relatively new, and the Office of the Prime Minister was created only a year ago, most staff in both the President and in the Prime Minister's offices would gain a greater understanding of their roles within the larger structure of government and civil society were they to attend a series of training sessions that provide an overview of the Georgian governmental structure, how it compares with other parliamentary systems, and an introduction to public administration and governing. A number of staff lack basic understanding of the roles of the various governmental institutions and their relationships, and of the role of government in its relations to the public. They need this background to understand the government's obligation to keep the public informed.

The Georgian Institute of Public Administration (GIPA) is the local organization most equipped to deliver this type of training, and is willing to customize a program for chancellery staff. Some of the courses offered by GIPA that could be recommended for the Chancellery staff include the following:

- **Introduction to Public Administration.** From the GIPA website, "This course is designed to introduce the students to the nature, principles, and practices of public administration. The course focuses on main themes and issues that public administrators come across in exercising their duties in the context of transition. Main topics of the course include political, legal, and institutional setting, issues of ethics, financial management, planning, and evaluation as well as management of nongovernmental organizations. The students will be introduced to basics of organizational theory and the role of public administration in the development process."
- **General Management.** This course gives the students an understanding of the principles of organization and management and how they apply to public organizations. Management—an integral part of all successful work—is essentially the art of getting things done through people and organizations. This course is designed to help students develop managerial capacity by providing knowledge and skills relevant to enhancing organizational performance and personal leadership.
- **Development of Leadership, Communication and Presentation Skills (Soft Skills).** This is a practical training course. Leadership as well as effective communication and presentation skills are one of the most important and necessary skills that public sector professionals and managers will

need. Through practical training students will be able to obtain and/or develop the above mentioned skills necessary for managing transition period more effectively.

GIPA's School of Public Administration has already assisted the President's Communications Office. They provided an international trainer on administrative issues who conducted training last December, and who will return in March. The School has also provided leadership training and training in effective decision making to defense officials.

GIPA's Caucasus School of Journalism and Media Management initiated their graduate program in 2002 and principally trains journalists in their English language program. They are planning to introduce political and corporate communication into their master's program, but have not yet developed a program for government officials or in strategic communication. The Journalism School's course on writing in English, (or a shortened version of it) could be useful for the communication staff in the President's Office who prepare English language news releases and statements, but most of their curricula is not applicable to the communication staff.

An initial seminar on writing press releases and announcements (writing the reporter's story) has been provided to the President's communication staff by the SNG project. Additional topics for training include:

- What are you trying to say: clarity and brevity in writing, and the importance of accuracy;
- Writing on deadline; and
- Writing for print, television, and web.

Some of this training can be provided on the job by the SNG project and supplemented by GIPA.

The Centre for Training and Consultancy (CTC) offers a number of courses such as professional administration and office management, human resource management, strategic management, project cycle management, fundamentals of marketing, and team building. They are currently working with the Tbilisi municipality and have previously worked with the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) to conduct team building exercises (one five-hour session) with MPs and their committee staff.

They are planning two, four- to five-day pilot trainings this spring for mid- and high-level public officials on skills for strategic advisors, and they have been in discussion with the Head of the Public Service Bureau to select employees to participate in the training. International trainers would provide the training in English. We requested that they coordinate with our project so that we could help select individuals from the chancellery and the ministries who would benefit from establishing relationships and training together.

We recommend that CTC provide basic skills training in professional administration and office management, strategic management, project cycle management (for the Public Affairs staff), and team building.

The Institute for Polling and Marketing (IPM) is a for-profit business consisting of three divisions: IPM Media, IPM Research, and IPM Consulting. IPM consults with private sector clients and provides skills training in time management, problem solving, team building, leadership, motivation, effective communication, and strategic communication.

IPM appears to have a good grasp of strategic communication and is willing to provide training in all aspects of the topic. A custom designed series of training classes should be developed for communication staff and include at least the following:

- The importance of strategic communication;
- The strategic planning process: identify your issue, message, audience, media and timeline; and
- The tools of strategic communication: research, written material, and free media.

Most staff would also benefit from IPM's courses in time management, problem solving, leadership, motivation, and effective communication.

In 2004, the **Civil Society Institute (CSI)** provided training in public policy analysis and public administration to almost 50 employees of the Ministries of Finance, Economy, Education, and Environment. (CSI provided the SNG project with a list of those employees.) Participants were selected by the ministries, under a memorandum of understanding with CSI, in which the ministry agreed to retain those mid-career employees who received training.

PROCEDURAL CHANGES

The following recommendations are meant to increase efficiency and effectiveness by improving communication and creating a forum for strategic planning.

CONDUCT REGULAR DEPARTMENT HEAD MEETINGS

It is important for the Chiefs of Staff (or other senior manager) to start the week with a quick run through of that week's priorities. These meetings may be brief; they are meant to make sure that everyone is on the same page and help the senior managers enforce accountability. Further, these meetings will help to develop a sense of community and purpose among the Department heads.

FACILITATE INTRODUCTIONS BETWEEN KEY STAFF OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE PRIME MINISTER WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS IN THE MINISTRIES

The vast majority of the President's and Prime Minister's staff do not know their counterparts in the Ministries. They understand neither the structure nor the responsibility of different departments. Admittedly, this is a moving target, but introductions would be easy, and important, even for the short term. This would go a long way toward incorporating the Ministries into the daily affairs of the Chancellery.

DEVELOP A PROACTIVE SCHEDULING PLAN

Key staff should identify all political, geographic, legislative, and policy targets and begin incorporating them into the weekly schedule. This may be happening on an ad hoc basis, but it needs to be formalized. Consultants can train in the development and execution of this plan.

TECHNOLOGY IMPROVEMENTS

The following recommendations address limitations on efficiency and effectiveness that result from inadequate technology.

INSTALL A BUILDING-WIDE PHONE SYSTEM

Communication is a problem due to the lack of a telephone system and the poor condition of telephone and fax equipment. In some offices, three employees share a single phone connected to a long cord. In most offices, staff rely on personal cell phones to conduct business.

The vast majority of offices lack essential communication tools such as voice mail—not to mention three-way calling, call forwarding, and other features that would enable staff to better communicate and allow citizens to be better served. Such a system would require a great deal of training, but is essential to improving the effectiveness of the operation.

NETWORK ENTIRE BUILDING

Focusing on the existing computer network would do more for productivity than the purchase of new computers. Connecting all departments would improve operations by enabling better communication and more efficient use of resources. Fax software would obviate the need for new fax machines, yet would allow all staff access to quality faxes. Entire departments could run on one printer/copier.

DEVELOP INTRANET FOR BOTH THE PRESIDENT'S AND PRIME MINISTER'S OPERATIONS

An intranet, accessible only by members of the President and Prime Minister's staff, would provide a forum sharing information. Staff phone, office, and responsibility lists could be accessible by all. The latest news and press releases could be shared thereby building a more effective and cohesive unit. Ministry staff information could be included as well. Separate sites could be built for Offices of the President and Prime Minister. Consultants can assist the development of this site.

PROCURE SCHEDULING SOFTWARE

Efficiency could be improved by procuring scheduling software that could be viewed by key members of the President's and Prime Minister's staff as well as Protocol and Security. Such networking would increase the flow of communication and involve more people in the principals' day-to-day activities. (This is, of course, assuming that a network is established and hardware provided.)

